

For those problems to be solved, FR-A-2744906 specifies that the hernia mesh fabric, in the vicinity of the mouth of the insertion slit, is provided with a sewing bridge that is able to be folded down on the insertion slit 5 and, on both sides thereof, to be stitched to the mesh material of the base sheet. Owing to that sewing bridge, the tabs of the hernia mesh blank that flank the insertion slit are kept level and smooth, but can be stitched up nevertheless. Any bulking and deforming of the hernia mesh fabric is avoided so that it may rest perfectly on the abdominal wall or on the dia-10 phragm.

In that prior art, the complicated handling of the separate sewing bridge poses problems, necessitating additional manufacturing implementation.

15 According to the characterizing part of claim 1, the invention proposes one-piece design of the sewing bridge from the mesh material of the base sheet. In this way, any complicated handling of small-surface mesh pieces for the purpose of being cut to size and fixed to the actual hernia mesh fabric can be dropped.

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Further preferred configurations of a hernia mesh fabric of that kind are specified in the sub-claims. Features, details and advantages of the invention will become apparent from the ensuing description of exemplary embodiments, taken in conjunction with the drawing, in which

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Fig. 1 is a plan view of a hiatus hernia mesh fabric;

Fig. 2 is a plan view of an inguinal hernia mesh fabric;

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## Claims

1. A hernia mesh fabric for repair of in particular inguinal or hiatus hernias, comprising

5      - a base sheet (1, 1', 1", 1'') of layered, flexible mesh material;

      - a passage (3) in the base sheet (1, 1', 1", 1'') for a body canal, in particular for the spermatic cord or the oesophagus;

      - an insertion slit (5) between the contour (4, 9) of the base sheet (1, 1', 1", 1'') and the passage (3) for insertion of the body canal into

10      the passage (3); and

      - a sewing bridge (7) which is located in the vicinity of the mouth (6) of the insertion slit (5) and which is able to be folded down on the insertion slit (5) and, on both sides thereof, to be stitched to the mesh material of the base sheet (1, 1', 1", 1'');

15      **characterized**

      - **in that** the sewing bridge is a bridge tongue (7) which is cut to size in one piece with the mesh material of the base sheet (1, 1', 1", 1'').

2. A hernia mesh fabric according to claim 1, **characterized in that** the

20      bridge tongue (7) has a rectangular basic shape of such dimensioning that, when it is doubled up, the insertion slit (5) is covered at least as far as slightly upstream of the passage (3).

3. A hernia mesh fabric according to claim 1 or 2, **characterized in that**

25      the bridge tongue (7) covers the insertion slit (5) on both sides substantially symmetrically.

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4. A hernia mesh fabric according to one of claims 1 to 3, **characterized in that** the bridge tongue (7), where directly adjoining the mouth (6) of the insertion slit (5) into the contour (4, 9) of the base sheet (1, 1', 1", 1""), is integrally attached to the base sheet (1, 1', 1", 1"").

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5. A hernia mesh fabric according to one of the preceding claims, **characterized in that** the base sheet (1, 1', 1", 1"") and/or the bridge tongue (7) have rounded corners (2, 2').

10 6. A hernia mesh fabric according to one of the preceding claims, **characterized in that** it is cut to size from meshed sheet material preferably of polypropylene by the aid of a laser cutting beam.

15 7. A hernia mesh fabric according to one of the preceding claims, **characterized by** a metal-containing, continuous, biocompatible coating.

8. A hernia mesh fabric according to claim 7, **characterized in that** the coating is a titanium-containing coating of a thickness of less than 2  $\mu$ m, preferably of 5 to 700 nm.

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9. A hernia mesh fabric according to one of the preceding claims, **characterized in that** the bridge tongue (7), in a condition of pre-fabrication, is doubled up and stitched to the mesh material of the base sheet (1, 1', 1", 1"") on one side of the insertion slit (5).

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10. A hernia mesh fabric according to claim 10, **characterized in that** the unilateral stitching arrangement is a double-stitched seam (12), comprising an outer seam (14) and a seam (15) which is displaced inwards at a distance therefrom.

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